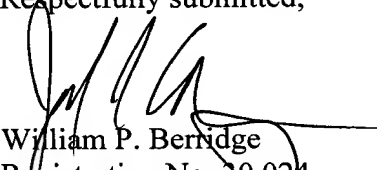


REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 7, 11, 16 and 17 are amended to eliminate multiple dependencies. Prompt and favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Respectfully submitted,



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Attached: APPENDIX

Date: July 9, 2001

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## APPENDIX

## Changes to Claims:

The following are marked-up versions of the amended claims:

7. (Amended) Transcription product which can be obtained by transcription of at least said portion of the *gag* gene of a fragment according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~.

11. (Amended) Method according to claim 8 ~~any one of claims 8 to 10~~, characterized in that the biological sample is a biological fluid chosen from serum, plasma, synovial fluid and urine.

16. (Amended) Reagent for detecting, in a biological sample, an autoimmune disease or monitoring pregnancy, comprising at least one fragment according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6, one transcription/translation product, as obtained according to the method of claim 11, one sythentic peptide belonging to SEQ ID NO. 31 or one protein according to claim 15 or 16~~.

17. (Amended) Use of a fragment according to claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 6, of a transcription/translation product, as obtained according to the method of claim 11, one sythentic peptide belonging to SEQ ID NO. 31 or one protein according to claim 15 or 16~~, for detecting, in a biological sample, susceptibility to an autoimmune disease, or monitoring pregnancy.